

WILLIAM PELHAM YARBOROUGH
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
May 12, 1912 – December 6, 2005

William Pelham Yarborough was born May 12, 1912 in Seattle, Washington. He is the son of Colonel Leroy W. and Addressia Yarborough. He attended high school at San Raphael Military Academy in California and later at Columbus, Georgia. Following graduation from West Point in June 1936 General Yarborough was assigned to the 57th Infantry, Philippine Scouts at Fort McKinley, Luzon where he remained until February 1940, when he was transferred to the 29th Infantry Regiment at Fort Benning, Georgia. He joined the newly formed 501st Parachute Battalion in late 1940 and was given command of Company "C". Later, as Test Officer for the Provisional Parachute Group in 1941, he designed the paratrooper's boot, the paratrooper's uniform, the parachutist's qualification badge, and a number of aerial delivery containers for which he received U. S. patents.

In July 1942 General Yarborough was selected by General Mark Clark to be his Airborne Advisor and in that capacity accompanied General Clark to England. As a working member of the London Planning Group, he developed the initial concept and plan for the airborne phase of the North African Invasion. When the Paratroop Task Force departed Land's End, England on November 7, 1942, General Yarborough as executive officer accompanied it on its flight over Spain toward its target objectives in Algeria. This was the longest operational flight ever made by parachute troops. In the course of the ensuing action the airplane in which he was flying was shot down by Vichy French fighter aircraft over the Sebokra d'Oran. A number of parachutists were killed and wounded in the action. After participating in combat operations to capture Tafaroui Airdrome in Algeria he parachuted into Youks les Bains Airfield near Tebessa, Algeria near the Tunisian border a week later, fighting with a combined French and U. S. Paratroop Task Force in Tunisia until January 1943, when he returned to the United States.

In March 1943 he returned to North Africa as Commander of the 2d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division, and led his unit through the Sicilian Invasion. Later, landing at Salerno, Italy, on D-Day as the airborne officer of G-3, Fifth Army, he organized the night drop zone to receive the latest elements of the 82d, which had flown from Sicily to relieve the beleaguered beachhead.

Just prior to the fall of Naples General Yarborough was given command of the 509th Parachute Battalion. His unit, as part of Darby's Ranger Force, made the initial landings at Anzio-Nettuno and held a key position on the beachhead for two months. Later under his command the 509th and two attached - parachute battalions spearheaded the invasion into Southern France, landing on a mountaintop near Le Muy before dawn. Cannes, Nice, Monte Carlo, along the Cote d'Azur fell to the parachutists who then turned northward into the Maritime Alps to protect the right flank of the U. S. Seventh Army as it moved north.

General Yarborough returned briefly to the United States to attend the 21st course of the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He returned to Europe in January 1945 as commander of the 473d Infantry Regimental Combat Team, which fought its way up the Ligurian Coast to Genoa and the French Border as World War II came to an end.

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In June 1945 the 473d Infantry Regiment was shipped back to the United States for deactivation and General Yarborough, remaining in Europe, was named as Provost Marshal; first of the 15th Army Group, and later of the U. S. Forces in Austria and the Vienna Area Command. In the latter position he organized the famous Four Power International Patrol of Russian, French, British, and American military police.

From 1947 to 1949 General Yarborough served as Director of the Department of Troop Information and Education at the Armed Forces Information School, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. In 1950 he returned to Europe for the third time to attend the British Staff College at Camberly, England. Upon graduation he was assigned to the NATO Plans Section of the Joint American Military Advisory Group to Europe, stationed in London.

He entered the Army War College as a student in 1952 and after graduation served on its faculty for three years.

In 1956 he became Deputy Chief of the U. S. Military Advisory and Assistance Group to Cambodia. He remained in this assignment until he returned to the Army War College for a temporary tour prior to assuming command of the 1st Battle Group, 7th Infantry at Fort Benning, Georgia, later moving it to Aschaffenburg, Germany. Leaving the Battle Group in 1958, he commanded the 66th Counterintelligence Corps Group in Stuttgart for two years until his reassignment to Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

In January 1961, he was appointed commander/commandant of the US Army Special Warfare Center/School for Special Warfare at Fort Bragg, NC. Remaining until 1965, he was instrumental in the build-up of Special Forces, overseeing the activation of four new Groups. He also worked diligently to increase the professional and academic standard of the JFK School, bringing in national figures in anthropology, history, science, and inviting leading political figures to speak. He initiated an exhaustive review of training programs and doctrine, and wrote numerous monographs on subjects pertaining to Special Operations, which are still relevant today. It was also under his management that foreign students were fully integrated into training and language instruction was expanded. He established five new courses including the Military Assistance Training Advisor School, the Unconventional Warfare course and the Counter-Terrorism course. He also initiated a staff study that later resulted in the movement of the US Army Civil Affairs School from Fort Gordon, GA to Fort Bragg.

It was during his tenure as Commander of the Special Warfare Center that in 1961, he arranged for President Kennedy to visit Fort Bragg, resulting in the authorization of the Green Beret for wear as the official headgear of Special Forces.

After his tenure at the Special Warfare School, he served as Senior Member, UN Command Military Armistice Commission, Panmunjom, Korea where he was the chief spokesman and negotiator for the UN Command in talks with the North Koreans and Chinese. He then was assigned as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Special Operations in the Pentagon with the responsibility of all Special Forces, PSYOP and Civil Affairs units and activities. In this position, he completed exhaustive studies on the state of insurgencies in Thailand and Latin America. A year later, he became the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence on the Army General Staff where he monitored the

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Army's intelligence training programs, provided finished intelligence materials to the Army General Staff and directed the Army's personnel security program. He also directed the programs in which foreign military attaches assigned to Washington were involved and was responsible for their accreditation by DA.

During the final years of his career, Yarborough was the Army's top intelligence officer at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. He assumed the command of I Corps in Korea in 1968, a position he held for a year. I Corps consisted of both conventional and nuclear weapons, two American divisions and three Korean Division and a Korean Marine Corps Brigade, numbering approximately 100,000 men. In 1969, he was assigned as the Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, responsible for directing a wide variety of Army activities in the Pacific Rim, including planning joint training exercises, response to natural disasters and monitoring intelligence operations. He retired from the Army in 1971.

In 1971, the Army tasked him to prepare a classified Asian study on the state of the Asian continent after the Vietnam Conflict. He also was a guest speaker for the National Strategy Information Center where he gave talks such as the Changing Balance of Military Power or the history of Special Forces to various groups around the country. He also was asked to visit various countries such as Rhodesia and Mozambique for the State Department. From his visits, he wrote various talking papers still in use today.

Lieutenant General Yarborough was a member of the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs. He is also an honorary member of the British SAS Regiment and a member of the St. John's Lodge 260, F&AM. He wrote two books: Bail Out Over North Africa and So You Want A Volunteer Army. General Yarborough was married to his wife Norma for over 60 years. They had three children: 2 girls and one boy. Mrs. Yarborough passed away in 1999. He was honored in the fall of 2005 with the donation of a bust in his honor at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, NC.

A veteran of four combat jumps, General Yarborough holds, among other awards and decorations, the Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star, Joint Services Commendation Medal, Italian Bronze Medal for Valor, Italian Cross for Valor, French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Regimental Badge 3d Zouaves, Korean Order of Merit Second Class, Combat Infantry Badge, the Cambodian, Korean, Philippine, Thai and Vietnamese Parachutist Badges, and the Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster.

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PERSONAL DATA (From GOMO File)

Born: 12 May 1912, Seattle, Washington

Father: Colonel Leroy W. Yarborough (U. S. Army Ret.), Hastings, Nebraska
(Deceased)

Mother: Adessia Hooker, Topeka, Kansas (Deceased)

Married: Norma Mae Tuttle, 26 December 1936, daughter of Colonel W. B. Tuttle
(U. S. Army Ret.) (Deceased) Mrs. Yarborough died in 1999.

Children: Norma Kay (Deceased) Captain William Lee Yarborough, U. S. Army,
Special Forces Patricia Mae

Civilian Education:

San Raphael Military Academy, San Raphael, California
Columbus High School, Columbus, Georgia

Military Education:

U. S. Military Academy (1936)

Parachute School (1941)

Command & General Staff College (1944)

British Staff College (1950)

Army War College (1953)

DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal

Silver Star

Legion of Merit with three Oak Leaf Clusters

Bronze Star

Joint Service Commendation Medal

Italian Bronze Medal for Valor

Italian Cross for Valor

French Croix de Guerre with Palm

Regimental Badge 3d Zouaves

Korean Order of Merit Second Class

Combat Infantry Badge

Cambodian, Korean, Philippine, Thai, and Vietnamese Parachutist Badges

Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster

Brazilian Order of Military Merit, Degree of Commander

LANGUAGES: French

RELIGION: Protestant (Episcopalian)

OFFICIAL HOME ADDRESS: Mechanicsville, Bucks County, Pennsylvania

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Master Parachutist

COUNTRIES VISITED: Philippine Islands, Cambodia, North Africa, Italy England,
Germany, France, Austria, Iran, Ethiopia, Greece, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan,
Portugal, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador,
Nicaragua, Colombia, Panama, Japan, Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, Vietnam,
Laos.

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<u>PROMOTIONS</u>	<u>TEMPORARY</u>	<u>PERMANENT</u>
2d Lieutenant		12 Jun 36
1st Lieutenant		12 Jun 39
Captain	10 Oct 40	12 Jun 46
Major	1 Feb 42	1 Jul 48
Lieutenant Colonel	19 May 43	
Colonel	15 Feb 45	
Lieutenant Colonel	19 May 43	7 Jul 53
Colonel	27 Aug 52	12 Jul 61
Brigadier General	24 Jun 61	21 Jul 62
Major General	1 Nov 63	2 May 66
	(DOR: 1 Aug 58)	(DOR: 4 Jun 63)
Lieutenant General		1968

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

U. S. Delegation, Inter-American Defense Board
U. S. Delegation, Joint Brazil-United States Defense Commission
U. S. Section, Joint Mexican-United States Defense Commission
U. S. Section, Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-United States
U. S. Section, Canada-United States Military Cooperation Committee

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<u>CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ASSIGNMENTS</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
57th Infantry, Philippine Scouts	1936	Feb 40
29th Infantry Regt, Ft Benning, Ga.	Feb 40	Dec 40
501st Parachute Battalion	Dec 40	1941
Provisional Parachute Group and AB Command	1941	1942
Airborne Advisor, Hqs II Corps, ETO	Jun 42	Oct 42
Exec Officer, Paratroop Task Force, North Africa	Nov 42	Dec 43
Asst G-3, Headquarters 5th Army, North Africa	Jan 43	Feb 43
2d Bn, 504th Para Infantry Regiment, 82d Abn Div	Mar 43	Jul 43
Asst G-3, Hqs 5th Army, Italy	Aug 43	Sep 43
509th Parachute Infantry, Italy	Sep 43	Sep 44
Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas	Oct 44	Jan 45
Commanding Officer, 473d Infantry, Italy	Feb 45	Apr 45
Provost Marshal, 15th Army Group, ETO	May 45	Jun 45
Provost Marshal, Vienna Area Command and U. S. Forces, Austria	Jul 45	Jul 47
Director, Dept TI&E, AIS, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.	Jul 47	Dec 49
British Staff College, Student	Jan 50	Dec 50
Operations Officer Gen Staff, JMAAG, London, England	Jan 51	Jul 52
Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. (Student and Faculty)	Aug 52	Feb 56
Deputy Chief, MAAG, Cambodia	Apr 56	Feb 57
Faculty, Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.	Mar 57	Jul 57
CO, 1st Battle Group, 7th Infantry, 3d Infantry Div., Fort Benning, Georgia	Sep 57	Apr 58
CO, 1st Battle Group, 7th Infantry, 3d Infantry Div., USAREUR	Apr 58	Oct 58
CO, 66th CIC Group, Stuttgart, Germany	Nov 58	Dec 59
CO, 66th Military Intelligence Group,, Stuttgart, Germany	Jan 60	Dec 60
CO, USA Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, N. C.	Jan 61	Jun 61
Commanding General, United States Army John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare and Commandant, U. S. Army Special Warfare School, Fort Bragg, N. C.	Jun 61	Feb 65
Senior Member, United Nations Command, Military Armistice Commission, Korea	Feb 65	Nov 65
Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations for Special Operations, DA, Washington, D. C.	Nov 65	Nov 66
Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, DA, Washington, D. C.		
Commander, I Corps, Korea	1968	1969
Chief of Staff/ Deputy Commander in Chief U.S. Army Pacific	1969	1971

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INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

General Yarborough was interested in journalism and had a number of articles published. Lecturer on irregular warfare at National War College, Army War College, Naval War College, Marine Corps Schools, Armed Forces Staff College, business, patriotic and Reserve groups. He was also interested in photography, enjoyed hunting and fishing, and was a collector of antique weapons, armor and military prints.

CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Fellow, Company of Military Historians
National Sojourners (Past President)
St. John's 260 F&AM
Association of the United States Army
Association of Graduates, U. S. Military Academy